

# PressRelease

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **WUTC penalizes Starving Students moving company for consumer violations**

**OLYMPIA, Wash.** -- Citing numerous consumer complaints and safety violations, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) today penalized the Starving Students, Inc. moving company.

The WUTC enforces consumer protection and safety regulations on household-goods moving companies operating within the state. Starving Students, Inc., a Los Angeles-based company, operates four branch offices in Washington.

The company will pay over \$59,225 in fines and reimburse the UTC \$18,600 in investigation costs and \$3,680 in overdue regulatory fees.

During a 1999 investigation of the company, the WUTC staff found over 600 separate violations of the state's consumer protection and safety requirements. A follow-up survey of more than 300 of the company's Washington customers identified further consumer problems: using verbal moving estimates (not allowed), failing to offer insurance coverage for loss or damage, employing untrained staff, neglecting delivery commitments and discouraging damage claims.

In its order, the commission ordered the company to undertake a number of measures including training managers and employees, reprogramming its computer system to avoid overbooking trucks and employees, and instituting a comprehensive safety program. The company also is prohibited from expanding beyond its four locations for a period of six months. Its current branches are in Seattle, Bellevue, Kent and Spokane.

Starving Students operates in 13 states and conducts roughly 50,000 moves annually. Last year in Washington, the company moved 3,855 households and grossed \$1.7 million.

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